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and since these editions sell widely, so also, doubtless, will this book. The surprising thing is that a firm of its publisher's standing should be upholding it with so great enthusiasm. The book is underbred from cover to cover. It is compact of provincial outlook, vulgar tone, flippant thinking, and sordid living.

There is no offense against morals in the book. Indeed, it is almost pathetic to realize what fair and decent morals may go hand in hand with execrable taste, imperfect acquaintance with the mother tongue, and vapid sentimentality. When sordid and common life is set down in all its sorrowful truth and careful detail by a man who knows it for what it is, as was done by Arnold Bennett in *Clayhanger*, or by Sudermann in *Das Hohe Lied*, or by Maupassant in *Une Vie*, it performs a function. It purges our hearts by means of pity, if not of terror. But set down by one who evidently feels it a goal, an ideal, a fair transcription, it can do nothing but lower all ideals.

One often feels in comparing our own fiction with foreign fiction that wickedness may have its purpose. The Middle Ages were full of wickedness, murder, bloodshed, wars, but also full of the great purging spiritual virtues. High emotions wait upon great actions, good or bad, and out of sorrow and remorse comes renewal of spirit. But what is to come out of sordid twaddle and jejune sentimentality?

THE COLONEL'S STORY. By Mrs. ROGER A. PRYOR. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1911.

It is pleasant to turn from a book like *Queed* to a book like *The Colonel's Story*. It is like emerging from the fly-specked dining-room of a fifth-rate boarding-house into a lady's drawing-room. One breathes more freely, and one remembers that there is still a remnant in our land of the old and high régime; a day when ladies spoke and behaved like ladies and when, as the Colonel told the little Dorothea, her motto was *noblesse oblige*, and "that means that, she is called upon to deny herself many things allowed humbler people and be at all times high and noble."

The Colonel's Story is a simple tale of old Virginia homes and manners and of an old Virginia gentleman who broke his heart because he loved a fair lady who loved another. It may not be a true tale, for long ago a good authority upon human life told us that "men have died, but not for love." But it is not for the story that we welcome this charming book by Mrs. Pryor. It is for its atmosphere, its high and noble breeding, its beautiful spirit, its historic value. It gives us a vivid picture of that lovely country of Virginia "befo' de wah." Was it ever as poetic, as ideal, as lovely as it lives now in the memories of those whose childhood days were then? Perhaps the very fact that the sordid details have been glossed over by time adds truth to the essential picture. At least we can say, "Here were the ideals of a certain race and a certain era." Our own land offers nothing lovelier.

Mrs. Pryor's power of characterization is excellent. Her characters—Anne Page, Shirley and Dorothea Berkeley, the Colonel, the doctor, Douglas Newton—all stand out and have reality and individuality. Her wit is sprightly and graceful and she has everywhere the great, the indefinable, the

much-harped-on quality—charm. Who would be introduced to Virginia of the old régime is fortunate to live in the day when Mrs. Roger Pryor can still perform the introduction.

THE LEGACY. By MARY S. WATTS. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1911.

This is a book to treat with seriousness and respect. Our democracy has cultivated in us a certain distrust for fine words and an accompanying reverence for all facts. To such tendencies in our development Mrs. Watts contributes. She speaks of her heroine as "cool-hearted and cool-minded," and only a very restrained and cool-minded author could have created Letty. We have to deal here with a sophisticated writer who has a firm sense of reality, a moral abhorrence of romantic heightening and sentimentality, a *flair* for fact. Letty is the offshoot of a degenerate aristocracy; one of those American families inordinately proud of themselves without very weighty reasons; a tribe given to fine words and elaborate manners, yet not above borrowing money with no particular surety as to eventual payment or above scraping through life with the minimum of effort. Letty has in her another strain. She is pre-eminently self-respecting. She does not prefer hard work, but she prefers it to dependence upon those upon whom she has no claim. Her "legacy" is an old portrait of a great-great-aunt whose name is never breathed in the family because there is some scandal and a separation from her husband connected with it. A curious likeness between Letty and the portrait of the naughty ancestress exists, and in Letty's mind there is always a quiet comparison between her own character and that of the lady of the portrait. Circumstances save Letty from the grosser sins, but she herself faces firmly the unadorned facts that she married her first husband for a home, her second husband for money and comfort. Also she considered the possibility of being faithless to the first husband, although she stopped short of the deed. On the other hand, she worked hard; she earned her living honorably when she had to; she was kind and fair, and cultivated justice, fortitude, and endurance. She had the virtues of strength and sophistication. She knew herself and never saw herself in a haze of romantic glamour. Because she knew herself she was merciful to others.

This is a new type of heroine, born of our deep-rooted reverence for facts. We feel no glow of emotion about her, but we know she would be comfortable to live with and honest in her dealings. Perhaps people are looked at more and more to-day as factors in the great social organism, and in such organism none could say that Letty would be a destructive or inimical factor.

The key-note of Mrs. Watts's style is restraint and quietude. She draws her characters firmly and without partiality. "So they moved before my vision" she would seem to say, "and just what I saw without prejudice and without passion that I give to you again."

DER NARR IN CHRISTO-EMANUEL QUINT. By GERHART HAUPTMANN. Berlin: S. Fischer, 1910.

Few poets of modern Germany have reflected in their works the dualism of their souls as clearly as Gerhart Hauptmann. He has faithfully tried